

ANNOUNCEMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

Bring the Solar System to YOUR Community – Become a MESSENGER Fellow

A MESSENGER Fellowship is a prestigious appointment, integral to the success of a NASA mission to the planet Mercury.

What is MESSENGER?

The human race is sending a spacecraft back to Mercury! NASA's MESSENGER (MErcury Surface, Space ENvironment, GEOchemistry, and Ranging) mission will be only the second spacecraft to ever visit the planet. To be launched in May of 2004, it will make two passes by Mercury in 2007 and 2008, and finally go into orbit in 2009. MESSENGER is destined to dramatically increase our understanding of Mercury and help reveal the story of the Solar System's formation. (Visit <http://MESSENGER.jhuapl.edu> for more information on the mission.) **How would you like to help take the nation along for the ride as a MESSENGER Educator Fellow?**

What is a MESSENGER Fellow?

The MESSENGER Education and Outreach Program Team is implementing a nationwide teacher training initiative whereby a cadre of thirty Fellows – master science teachers at the elementary, middle, and high school level – will conduct educator workshops nationally, training up to 27,000 grade pre-K through 12 educators over the mission's lifetime. Fellows will train educators on concept-based, inquiry driven lessons developed by the MESSENGER education team. These science standards-based lessons address solar system science, planetary observations through history, and the engineering associated with building and sending a spacecraft to another world. Additional lessons will highlight other NASA solar system exploration missions. As educators, this is your chance to make a real impact in the pre-K-12 community.

What organizations are involved in the MESSENGER mission?

The MESSENGER mission is supported by the NASA Discovery Program under contract to the Carnegie Institution of Washington and the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory. The MESSENGER Education and Outreach Program Team is made up of individuals from the following organizations: Challenger Center for Space Science Education, Carnegie Academy for Science Education, Center for Educational Resources at Montana State University-Bozeman, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Minority University-SPace Interdisciplinary Network, National Air and Space Museum, Goddard Space Flight Center, and Science Systems and Applications, Inc.

If selected as a Fellow, what can I expect?

Candidates selected for the MESSENGER Educator Fellowship will receive the following:

- An all-expense-paid, five-day training workshop at Challenger Center in Alexandria, Virginia, close to the nation's capital, during the last week in June. Fellows will receive training on the mission, the MESSENGER lessons, and workshop curricula for the workshops they are to conduct nationally. The training will also provide Fellows with a unique opportunity to interact with MESSENGER mission scientists and engineers.
- A press release issued to your community and school district on acceptance to the position, as well as business cards.
- A presenter's package, and a limited annual stipend, for conducting MESSENGER workshops. The package includes the MESSENGER grade K-12 lessons, multi-media resources, and relevant educational supplies.
- Resources that allow you to become a leader in space science education in your community, such as free access to *Teachable Moments in the News*. This resource alone will allow you to offer local educators strategies for bringing current news in solar system exploration into their classroom (visit www.challenger.org/tmn).
- Priority updates and mailings on the latest MESSENGER information, and materials to help plan and promote your educator workshops.
- Ongoing contact with the MESSENGER science team to answer questions and facilitate discussion.
- Ongoing logistical and informational support from Challenger Center for all aspects of the MESSENGER Educator Fellowship Program. Challenger Center will facilitate communications with and between the Fellows.

What is the commitment expected of a MESSENGER Fellow?

Fellows must commit to conducting MESSENGER educator-training workshops for a minimum of **120 teachers per year**, and sharing evaluation information from those workshops with Challenger Center.

Can a Fellow charge a fee for the workshops they conduct?

Challenger Center recognizes that some workshops will need to be conducted on a cost recovery basis (for materials, space use fees, mailings, and presenter honorarium, where appropriate). Workshop charges to participants would require approval by Challenger Center and the MESSENGER Outreach Team.

How will Fellows be selected?

This Announcement of Opportunity will be distributed every year to solicit applications for the MESSENGER Educator Fellowship Program. A total corps of thirty Educator Fellows will be maintained, each selected for a two-year Fellowship. At the end of their second year Fellows can reapply to continue in the program. In the spring of 2003 half the Fellows were recruited. The second half of the corps will be recruited through this solicitation.

In order to maximize the reach of the program, Fellows will be chosen to reflect a geographically and institutionally diverse mix of individuals from a variety of

settings—science centers/museums, school districts, universities, educational organizations, etc.

While a variety of factors will be used in the final selection, a MESSENGER Educator Fellowship candidate must be actively teaching or conducting teacher training in a formal or informal science education environment (e.g., school district, science center, museum, educational organization).

Listed below are the application submission requirements:

- A written commitment from your host institution (current employer or sponsoring organization) to provide you release time to conduct MESSENGER educator training workshops, and an expressed willingness to support you in these efforts throughout the two-year Fellowship.
- A current resume or curriculum vitae.
- Two letters of reference from individuals or institutions that are familiar with your teaching style and can speak to your success as a presenter.
- A two-page proposal outlining an implementation plan for the workshops you would conduct, including possible venues, audiences, and goals.
- A completed Application Form.
- A ten-minute video sample of yourself teaching/training an audience on an inquiry-based, hands-on lesson. The video sample should clearly demonstrate your abilities to facilitate inquiry-based learning. (Note that it may take some time to create this sample, so don't wait until the last minute.)

To receive an Application Form or if you have any questions, please contact Senayt Assefa at Challenger Center either by e-mail (sassefa@challenger.org) or phone 703-683-9740 or 1-800-969-5747. Applications are due at Challenger Center by close of business March 30, 2004. Fellowship Awards will be announced in mid-to-late April 2004.